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Savage River Watershed Association

Marcellus Shale Follow-up #2

Thanks to all of you who continue to request more information about Marcellus Shale issues. SRWA hopes that the following resources will help us meet the many challenges posed by this large-scale industry on our quality of life, and the health of our people and environment. Additional updates will be sent as new information becomes available.

New Web Links

Garrett County Marcellus Shale Web Page

Suggestions for site content can be sent to Cheryl DeBerry at cdeberry@garrettcountry.org
<http://MarcellusShale.GarrettCounty.org>

MD Department of Natural Resources

<http://www.dnr.state.md.us/irc/bibs/marcellusshale.html>

Recent News Releases Reference Marcellus Shale

The Nature Conservancy Report on Marcellus Shale and Wind Turbines in PA

<http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/pennsylvania/news/news3511.html>

Wind Turbine Meeting on Sunday, December 5th

A group of concerned citizens will be meeting at the Emmanuel United Methodist Church on the National Highway just west of Frostburg in Garrett County at 7:00 pm. This will be an action meeting lasting no more than an hour tops. The focus will be how to approach the Commissioner-elects (Raley, Crawford, & Gatto) to place an immediate moratorium on the wind turbine industry and then plan for some reasonable regulations such as setbacks and decommissioning regs. Please attend and tell your neighbors. For more information contact Jeff Conner at jeffconner@atlanticbb.net

Pennsylvania Investigating Spill at Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Well Site

State officials were investigating a leak of drilling wastewater at a natural gas well site in north-central Pennsylvania that polluted a stream and a spring, a Department of Environmental Protection spokesman said Tuesday, Nov. 23. A department inspector discovered the leak last week while visiting a producing well owned by XTO Energy Inc. in Lycoming County, where the company is tapping into the vast Marcellus Shale gas reserve. For more of this story, click on or type the URL below:

http://www.montgomerynews.com/articles/2010/11/27/montgomery_life/news/doc4ced2aafaf6e2166257428.txt

Public Meeting set Dec. 15 on Truck Traffic in Woodward, PA - Lockhaven.com

November 27, 2010 - By SCOTT JOHNSON

DUNNSTOWN - Local law enforcement officials have scheduled a public meeting to address concerns and answer questions about the ever-increasing truck traffic related to the Marcellus Shale natural gas industry in Woodward Township. Woodward Township Police Chief Steve Falotico and

State Police Trooper Kevin Miller - one of the local state police truck inspectors - have scheduled the informational meeting for 6 p.m. on Dec. 15 at the Dunnstown Fire Hall. "Kevin and I have talked about it for awhile and we're both getting a lot of questions about the trucks," Falotico said. "It was suggested we have a town meeting and explain what's going on with the trucks and the increase of truck traffic with the gas industry." The biggest concern - at least at the start of the school year - dealt with the trucks going up and down Coudersport Pike, especially when the school buses are running, Falotico said. Falotico said it wouldn't be feasible to limit the trucks' usage of Coudersport Pike during school bus times because it is a public road. "We instructed the drivers to be even more careful during that time of the day," he said. "It is a public road and we can't stop people from running on the road. We can ask, that's about it." "We mostly heard the concerns at the start of the school year. We haven't heard much since then," Falotico continued. "Our officers and state police are monitoring the area pretty heavily." Other concerns deal with the use of Jake brakes, the trucks running 24 hours a day and other safety questions, including speeding, he said. Not only are the trucks using Route 664 (Coudersport Pike), but also the heavily-traveled Route 150. Falotico noted while most people know the large amount of traffic on Route 150, it's not widely known how heavily-traveled the Coudersport Pike is, also. "It's not a surprise," he said of the large amount of traffic on Route 664. "The amount of traffic we have on that road normally is pretty heavy." Community members who observe problems with the trucks should write down the company's name and truck number. "Kevin and I have spoken with the trucking companies and if we have a particular problem, they will deal with the trucks themselves after we're done dealing with them," Falotico said. The Dec. 15 meeting will be more of a question-and-answer session with the public. "If you have questions about the increased traffic, you can ask them," he said. "We want to make it a forum to speak with us about them. If there's something we can do, we will... and also explain some things we can't do... We hope to give them an answer. If not, we'll get the answer and get back with them. "The way it sounds, (the traffic) will be ever-increasing," Falotico continued. "Now, it is picking up even more. During the winter months, it will probably slow down a little, but in the spring I'm sure it will increase again. "They are here to stay."

<http://www.lockhaven.com:80/page/content.detail/id/527580.html>

New York Could BE First State to Ban Controversial Drilling Practice

<http://www.cnn.com/2010/US/12/02/new.york.fracking.moratorium/index.html?hpt=T2>

Testing Your Well

*The following information is from a fact sheet for PA homeowners provided by Marianne Metzger, National Testing Laboratories, Ltd / Toll Free: 800-458-3330 or 800-H2O-TEST / www.ntllabs.com. **NTL advised that they should have well tests recommended for Maryland homeowners shortly.***

Baseline Water Quality

If your source of drinking water comes from a private well and there are gas-drilling activities going on in the area, it is important to test your well water to establish a baseline water quality. It is possible the gas drilling may affect the quality of your well water and without testing prior to the gas drilling, you have no proof that your well water has diminished in quality, thus no legal recourse. The following test packages are certified and are recommended by Wilkes University and Penn State University for those well owners in this situation. Keep in mind that the more you test for, the more information you will have about your water quality and how it may have been affected.

Test Package #1 Offers the minimum amount of testing recommended. These are very basic parameters that are likely to change as a result of gas drilling. The items included in this test are: Total Coliform Bacteria, E-Coli Bacteria, Total Dissolved Solids (TDS), pH, Barium, Bromide, Chloride, Iron, Manganese, Foaming Agents, Sodium and Methane/Ethane.

Cost of Testing: \$425.00 Sample Collection: Dependent upon area

Test Package #2 Offers additional parameters that are complementary to those already being tested for in Test #1. The additional parameters include Alkalinity, Arsenic, Calcium, Conductivity, Hardness, Magnesium, Nitrate, Selenium, Strontium, Sulfate, Total Suspended Solids, Zinc,

Oil/Grease and a full Volatile Organic Compound scan.

Cost of Testing: \$725.00 Sample Collection: Dependent upon area

Test Package #3 Is the most comprehensive testing package and adds the following items in addition to Tests 1 & 2: Potassium, Sulfide, Ammonia, Acidity, Nickel, Lead, Uranium and Gross Alpha/Beta. Cost of Testing: \$1,100.00 Sample Collection: Dependent upon area **Potential**

Add-on Options Radium 226/228 \$350.00 Chemical Oxygen Demand \$ 40.00

Total Phenols \$125.00 Total Petroleum Hydrocarbon \$120.00

Phthalates & Adipates \$350.00 Glycols \$120.00

Comments received from David Bolton, Hydrologist, MD Geological Survey to questions from SRWA.

*Bolton co-authored the USGS fact sheet on the **Sustainability of Water Resources in the Fractured-Rock Area of MD**; the link was in SRWA's first follow-up but here it is again in case you missed it:*

<http://md.water.usgs.gov/publications/fs-2009-3009/Fractured-Rock%20Fact%20Sheet%202009-3009.pdf>

"Regarding the fact sheet: as you know, the impetus for the regional water-resource assessments (including both the fractured-rock assessment and a coastal-plain assessment) was the recommendation of the Water Resources Advisory Committee, which in turn was formed after the severe droughts of 1999 and 2002 that threatened water supplies in central Maryland. At the time, the issue of Marcellus Shale really wasn't big on the radar screen. Of course, in light of what we now know about the enormous quantities of water needed for fracking, as well as water-disposal issues, it has the potential to be a major issue. It's my understanding that the only current permit application for Marcellus drilling in Maryland stipulates that water will come from an existing municipal supply, and that all produced water will be disposed of out-of-state. However, that takes care of one site, and the concerns you raise have not been addressed for additional drilling that may be done in the future.

Groundwater in Garrett and Allegany Counties has not been as thoroughly studied as it has in central and eastern Maryland. There is little data on aquifer hydraulic properties or streamflow, and both of these will be needed in order to make any type of intelligent assessment of the long-term sustainability of the resource, under any scenario. Overall water quality has also not been thoroughly studied, although some issues are known. MGS has collected a small amount of data on depth to saline water in Garrett County. The GC Health Dept monitors naturally-occurring arsenic throughout the county. However, there has been no systematic study of GW quality.

The best way to safeguard against contamination related to drilling/production operations is to establish regulations and permitting requirements for well drilling and construction that maximize environmental protection. The regulations for gas well drilling have not been updated in many years, and I don't believe there's any existing regulations related to fracking gas wells. I believe these are being discussed within the Md. Department of the Environment.

Feel free to share my comments. I would like to emphasize that the state, through the permitting process (i.e. MDE), is working diligently to address the various concerns regarding all aspects of drilling and production in the Marcellus (water sources, water treatment/disposal, air quality, dam safety, noise, roads, etc), and is closely examining the issues, problems and solutions that have arisen in adjoining states. The Survey, while not part of the permitting agency, is in contact with MDE in an advisory role with regard to groundwater issues. Locally in Garrett County, much of the discussion may be centered around economic gains, but the State agencies are well aware of the larger issues.

I should also point out that the only permit moving forward at this point is for an exploratory well, not production well (reflecting the State's caution in moving forward with permitting production of natural gas from the Marcellus). Because there have been so few hydrocarbon wells drilled in MD in the past our existing regulations and permitting requirements will probably need to be updated legislatively."

On-line Tool to Research Gas Leases in Garrett and Allegany Counties

The following link and how-to-description was forwarded by Paul Roberts, Friendsville.

<http://www.mdlandrec.net/msa/stagser/s1700/s1741/cfm/index.cfm?CFID=21253964&CFTOKEN=69705559>

Before you can use the directory, you must set up an account and they assign you a password by email (all explained in the User Guide on the home page at this link). It usually requires only a few hours for the password to arrive. Then click on either Garrett or Allegany county, and then click Search County Land Record Indices. This opens to a search page. This is not easy to use. Some tips: if you know the last name on the lease you wish to locate, that's pretty easy under Search for Instruments by Grantee/Grantor. You can also enter the name of the energy company you believe may have bought a lease, in the box below the individual lease box, which is useful if you don't know who lives on a certain property but have reason to believe a certain company bought the lease. But you really must know one or the other to use the search engine. When the list of files appear in your search, click on the farthest right-hand column to open the file.

As for understanding the legalese: there may be several types of legal instruments under a given name or company. In the entries that pop up, most mineral leases will say Oil and Gas Lease, or Memorandum to a Lease, or Sale of Hydrocarbon Rights. Typically the deed will contain the number of acres involved and a price paid annually for the "rental" rights (lease), plus when the sale occurred, etc. and a lot of verbiage you won't understand. If it's your lease and are concerned about whether it says what you think, absolutely hire an attorney. No one who isn't sure what they signed or may be considering renewing should attempt to do so without legal counsel. Any boiler-plate lease given to you by the gas company will be written to favor the company and many contain clauses that damage your rights. Also, if you signed a lease that you now regret, you may still be able to get out of the lease. Again, consult an attorney. This gives you access to every gas lease written, and will automatically update as new ones are filed at the clerk's office in the Garrett County Courthouse in Oakland.

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*SRWA is a group of local landowners and other citizens dedicated to preserving and enhancing the rural nature and natural resources of the Savage River watershed by assisting interested landowners and public land managers with environmental stewardship efforts and educational outreach.*

*Board Members: Kenny Braitman, Annie Bristow, Mike Dean, John Fritts, Ed Gates, Carol McDaniel, Liz McDowell, Rich Raesly, Matt Sell, Tom Wolfe*

*SRWA is a 501c3 non-profit charitable organization. Please consider joining or making a donation. For more information visit our web site at [www.savageriverwatershed.org](http://www.savageriverwatershed.org)*